

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Focused Inspection Project: Residential Construction

Inspection data timeframe: June 21, 2012 to July 20, 2012

This report includes inspection data up to July 27, 2012

Report Date: July 31, 2012

**Government
of Alberta ■**



1.0 Introduction

Alberta Human Services (HS), Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) identified Residential Construction as an area for focused inspections in the 2012-13 fiscal year.

The purpose of the focused inspections was to raise awareness of specific known workplace hazards, and ensure compliance with the OHS Act, Regulation and Code.

The overall goal was to enhance the awareness of employers, contractors and prime contractors as to their responsibility to protect the health and safety of workers on residential construction sites by identifying and controlling known hazards associated with their work or the work of their subcontractors.

2.0 Overview of Focused Inspection Project

2.1 Residential Construction

Residential construction refers to new home construction using construction materials, methods and procedures that are essentially those used for typical wood frame single and multi-family dwellings including all walk-ups that do not have a full-time site superintendant. Examples include: single family homes, duplex, triplex, 4-plex, row housing or townhouse condominium.

Residential construction typically does not apply to apartment-type buildings or any part of a commercial/industrial/institutional building.

Inspections were conducted with prime contractors, employers, contractors, sub-contractors, employers and workers conducting work on residential construction projects. Inspections were conducted during all periods when work was in progress including evenings and weekends.

2.2 Inspection Focus

OHS Officers conducted proactive inspections at residential construction sites across the province over the 30 day period from June 21, 2012, to July 20, 2012. Follow-up inspections continue to ensure compliance is validated with Orders issued.

Inspections were conducted across a number of industries including the following:

- 02100 – Landscaping including maintenance
- 40401 – Construction, Residential
- 40405 – Residential General Contractor
- 42111 – Painting & Decorating

42113 – Tile & terrazzo, sale/install
42115 – Paving stone, sale/install
42117 – Heating System (HVAC) - Fab/Install
42118 – Roofing
42127 – Fences - Sell/Rent/Install
42125 – Floor covering, sale/install
42133 – Cabinets/counters, asbestos/install
42135 – Drywall, plaster, lath, stucco. Etc.
42136 – Sprinklers, underground, asbestos/install
42141 – Acoustic materials, sale/install
42143 – Wood Framing
42147 – Finishing Carpentry
42151 – Siding/Eavestrough - Mfg./Installation
42139 – Industrial coating services

OHS Officers focused their inspections on, but did not limit their inspection to, parts and sections of the OHS legislation commonly observed to be in noncompliance such as:

- OHS Act Part 2 (Section) 5 Contractor Responsibilities
- OHS Act Part 3 (Section 3) Responsibility of Prime contractor
- Part 8 - Entrances, Walkways & Stairs
- Part 9 - Fall Protection
- Part 18 - Personal Protective Equipment
- Part 22 - Safeguards
- Part 23 - Scaffolds and Temporary Work Platforms

OHS Officers completed the following during their inspections:

- Determined compliance with applicable sections of the *Albert OHS Act*, Regulation and Code.
- Provided publications to assist employers in understanding their responsibilities
- Addressed additional hazards observed during their inspection. If the OHS Officer identified an immediate danger situation, a Stop Work or a Stop Use Order was issued to the employer as required.
- Issued a written Client Contact Report to the employer, documenting the results of the Officer's observations, and any Orders issued to correct observed issues of noncompliance.
- Where appropriate, met with the Prime Contractor and/or any Contractors regarding their legislated responsibilities.
- Completed a re-inspection of the worksite with the employer, Prime Contractor and/or Contractors to verify compliance with any issued Orders.
- Ensured that all Orders were posted in accordance with Section 9 of the OHS Regulation.

3.0 Results of Inspection

3.1 Number of Inspections

This project took place between June 21, 2012 and July 20, 2012. Follow-up inspections continue to ensure compliance is validated with Orders issued. For the purposes of this report, inspection data is included up to and including July 27, 2012.

OHS Officers conducted a total of 342 inspections, 232 initial and 110 follow-up at residential construction worksites in Alberta. Inspections were completed on 241 employers across the province. Approximately 10% of these inspections were conducted during evenings or weekends.

3.2 Meetings and Other Activities

OHS officers conducted 50 meetings to ensure that Prime Contractor and Contractor legislated requirements with respect to employers activities on sites were being met.

In addition to inspections and meetings, on 19 occasions OHS officers were required to conduct documentation reviews.

3.3 Orders Issued

A total of 385 Orders were issued to employers during this Residential Construction focused inspection project. Those included 94 Stop Work Orders and 6 Stop Use Orders.

Table 1: Orders issued, by type

Type of Order	Count	% (*)
Order	285	74%
Stop Use Order	6	2%
Stop Work Order	94	24%
Total Orders	385	100%

Table 2: All Orders issued, by Part or Section of the OHS Act and Code

OHS Act	Count	%
Section 2 - Obligations of Employer, Workers, Contractors, etc.	15	4
Section 3 - Prime contractor	7	2
OHS Code,		
Part 2 – Hazard Assessment, Elimination & Control	55	14
Part 3 – Specifications and Certifications	7	2
Part 7 – Emergency Preparedness and Response	7	2
Part 8 – Entrances, Walkways, Stairways, and Ladders	38	10
Part 9 – Fall Protection	172	44

Part 11 – First Aid	7	2
Part 12 – General Safety Precautions	3	1
Part 18 – Personal Protective Equipment	3	1
Part 19 – Powered Mobile Equipment	7	2
Part 22 – Safeguards	44	11
Part 23 – Scaffolds and Temporary Work Platforms	18	5
Part 29 – Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System	2	0
Total	385	100%

Table 3: Stop Use/Work Orders Issued by Part of the OHS Code

OHS Code	Stop Use	Stop Work
Part 2 – Hazard Assessment, Elimination & Control		3
Part 3 – Specifications and Certifications	1	2
Part 8 – Entrances, Walkways, Stairways, and Ladders	1	
Part 9 – Fall Protection	1	81
Part 22 – Safeguards		3
Part 23 – Scaffolds and Temporary Work Platforms	3	5
Total	6	94

Inspection Findings Overview

- 77% of all orders issued were related to the focused areas of inspection.
- 44% (172/385) of all orders issued were related to fall protection.
- 82% (82/100) of all Stop Use/Stop Work Orders issued were related to Part 9 – Fall Protection.
- 31% of initial inspections resulted in no orders issued to the employer.
- The results of the 2011 and 2012 residential construction focused inspection projects indicate that fall hazards continue to be a concern in this industry sector.

4.0 Next Steps

OHS Officers continue to conduct inspections to ensure compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety *Act*, Regulation and Code.

The results of focused inspection projects including this Residential Construction Project will be evaluated in the overall operational strategy for 2013.

The results of this Residential Construction Focused Inspection Project will be reviewed as part of the Residential Construction Industry Health and Safety Strategic Plan.